KASHMIRI PANDIT LEADERS

MY IMPRESSIONS

BY

O. N. KAK *M.A.*

SRINAGAR - KASHMIR

Price : Rupees Thirty

To

The Sacred Memory

of

Swami Vivekananda,

the outstanding spiritual supremo

of

the world,

is this study dedicated.

Other Published Works by the same author: Kashmir Warbling; Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad; A Plaint by Mahjur; Canker in our Educational Fabric; Gandhiji's Spiritual Philosophy; Swami Vivekananda and Kashmir; Sylvan Shrine of Ramakrishna; O Tangmarg; Be a Lamp unto Thyself; Indira Gandhi and Emergency; Harassment Bureau; Of Umesh's Wife......... What he thought and what he got; Saint poet Krishandas of Kashmir; Political Combat in Kashmir; Moon's Rendezvous with Shiva (Translation); etc., etc.

Srinagar, Kashmir

1988

In

Perennial fondness

for

Ramneek and Nitin,

who fill the crevices of my

inner desolation with

multi - hued healing floral extracts.

In

Quest of a future

K. P. Leader from amongst the youth

to salvage the community's sinking ship,

to restore life to its numbers,

to wrest monopoly and accumulated

community pelf

from the present dacoit-leaders

and initiate the future course himself

in concert with his new team

in anticipation of a bright tomorrow.

PAINT ME AS I AM. IF YOU LEAVE OUT THE SCARS AND WRINKLES, I WILL NOT PAY YOU A SHILLING.

—OLIVER CROMWELL

memory

From Nath
Bazaz and
Raghunath Wishnavie
Igonnell

H. N. Wanchoo

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FOREWORD

The author Shri O. N. Kak, has asked me to pen down a foreword for his book, Kashmiri Pandit Leaders, which he proposes to publish. I was told that my name also figured somewhere in the book. When the author asked me to pen down the foreword, I got the chapter wherein my name was mentioned taken out from the typed copy of the book, so that I am not influenced either way in writing this foreword.

However, I have gone through the contents of the book except the portion relating to myself. The author has written some books earlier also. In writing this foreword I do not associate myself with his assessment of our leaders. The book shows an earnest attempt of the author to pen down the services or dis-services that our note-worthy leaders from our community from time to time rendered to this community and the country at large.

Ours is a small community and very few people will bend themselves to trying to write about our leaders. I would have wished that the details about the gentlemen mentioned in the book were more specific and covered their full life histories, but the author has confined his discussion of the leaders vis-a-vis their contribution to the community and the political, social and cultural set-up thereof. It is a laudable attempt and I hope after further enquiries the author will make his book more useful and more informative. The author deserves thanks for his initiative in this behalf. However, I noticed that he has left out one great Kashmiri Pandit leader, who is a glaring figure in the history of the State, namely, late Pt. Hargopal Kaul.

J. N. Bhat (Justice)

INTRODUCTION

In delineating the Kashmiri-Pandit leaders I don't embark upon a portrayal of their lives as much as their works bearing upon public, especially their community which has witnessed many a leader-status person who nowise rose to the challenging task of bringing about any resurgence of the community (Kashmiri-Pandit) but emerged and sank from the weight of avarice and temptations, thus leaving it again and again in the lurch, exposed to wanton exploitation and hardship.

I, personally, cannot help harbouring that this much-accommodating community, the youth, female figures and buoyant youngmen and the senile and the rich and the poor whereof are responsive to any move initiated by self-styled lubberly leaders, as it were, on the pretext of bringing about their weal and metamorphosis, has, by and large, been betrayed and wronged and hoodwinked; this does not imply that not an individual surfaced from amidst them who could be efficacious and rise to the occasion when needed; this signifies that barring a few, say one or two, all, raising the trumpet of service-to-the-community in the initial stages, frantically pursued the rabid course of self-aggrandisement, graft and massive defalcations and rendering service to their person at the expense of the community which they played successive frauds upon unrelentingly, disappeared to the shell of their domestic comfort, recking little for the suffering credulous community members who scrupled not to rain pelf and support upon them anticipating some programme from them in the direction of remedying their ills foisted upon them through the penchant for narrow and selfish approach.

Were such onslaughts perpetrated upon any other units of the mankind organised anywhere for the sake of self-assertion and making themselves felt, they, doubtless, would have risen as one man, hauled up the miscreants and interred them alive, but a Kashmiri-Pandit youth, wearing a pleasing personality,

with large bright eyes, breaking into disarming smile over the buffets of wrong dealt out to him, would not go beyond being complainant; he being assiduous would endeavour other ways to render himself a useful citizen; he would start a quest for any possible leader to whom he would confide his plight with a view to have justice dispensed to him, but, again, would fall into the grip of social pests and sharks who would pitilessly be extortionate towards him.

This goes sans question that the leaders of the status of S. M. Abdullah himself lamented loud the absence of a true and sincere and revolutionary-type K. P. leader who could deliver the goods competently, honestly, effectively and efficaciously, a towering one to embark upon a broad-based, dynamic programme and ameliorative measures for smoothing and integrating the scattered fabric of the community members who individually are highly patriotic and generous and nowise resent offering finances for a seeming cause, but, subsequently, sulk, of course justifiably, for having been cheated and deserted.

I have none in my mind who has impressed me favourably hitherto out of a cluster of so-called leaders, all fake and farcical and pseudo; persons to strike me as everyone else are Mr. Kashyapbandhu and Mr. Sheonarayan Fotedar; the one, a born revolutionary, having left a legend and a legacy, the other, splendid and scintillating, greatly public-spirited and highly munificent. Even now, when scores of years have rolled down the corridor of time, K. P. youth should feel proud of such leaders who verily have been inimitable, unique, possessed of myriad qualities and virtues betokening public-spirit and been formidably and massively helpful to their predecessors and the community by and large.

The rest have been and are a pack of paltry and feeble hawking-touts, masquerading as leaders and community well-wishers, but virtually social drones and minotaurs who need to be extirpated root and branch through a verdict of the community, especially its fragrant but mauled youth.

K. P. talent has sufficiently been descanted upon everywhere; even Nehru several times lauded their enterprising qualities; the

all-towering S. M. Abdullah did acknowledge the inherent K. P. talent; whereas he stood misrepresented, misinterpreted, he had all praise for the community and never, launched any type of programme calculated to be derogatory to their interests.

If K. Pandits are scattered throughout the entire world, carry on efficiently and adventurously in the teeth of odds and shattering catastrophies and whirligig of time, it is all ascribed to their congenital spirit of initiative and drive, resourcefulness and independent productive thinking. They stand sans their leader; they face vicissitudes manfully and diligently, persevere and endeavour to the last, and in the path scarce falter; they may falter, may stumble, but yet they stand, exhibiting their innate talent and stamina; they bleed, but yet endeavour to keep themselves in fine fettle and trim, hardly manifesting their inner strains and storms surging their bosom and are very much known for consolidation after every traitrous design born of malevolence on the part of so-called leaders who have done no service to them, but have, to be candid, sabotaged their cause and mercilessly enacted Jaichand role.

And these Jaichands have been our fake leaders, one and all, save one or two through whose services a semblance of grace yet characterises them.

I could very well and conveniently paint all such "Heroes" bright, were I too harbouring the intention of ingratiating myself with them, because all such hawking-tout leaders are very much extant, but that could be an indisputed imitation of their role which I nowise wish to play; K. P. Baradari has been victimised, oppressed and wronged excessively, and to try to have this obnoxiously disgraceful game wound up, I feel it a necessity, nay, O, a desideratum, to scribble these broken words in a modest but sincere bid to introduce the youth of today out of the Baradari, to this villainous charlatanry of their leaders who need be thrown overboard by the youth, high time as it is.

Conferences and meets are held sporadically where the grievances of the community are highlighted, the youth and the gullible gentry and citizenry are dodged and duped into

payments of huge sums to such touting leaders and after the amassing of money, the entire activity vapours away into undesirable prolonged bouts of lethargy and culpable indolence. Not only that; the subscriptions go to the coffers of a few, one or two or three and the community as a whole stands groaning and reeling under the carcase weight of deprivation and diminution.

But how long and how far will this system continue? There should, as a matter of fact, be an end thereto, or else the youth of today are sure to suffer faultlessly, and that is cruel, barbarous and savage.

It is quite clear and can scarce be brought within the ambit of dispute that no group, no professional combine, no community or the like have any ratings of survival in this era of terrific competition and rivalry and jealously and cut-throat insidious play of treachery sans a lofty forum, a towering sincere leader and a press squaring with the situation. Nowhere in any part of the world have the segments of organised and elite population been able to live honourably, commanding civil rights and discharging matching duties save these three indisputable Musts.

Without a competent organisation the possibility and prospect of an untrammelled existence for a community are verily bleak; like-wise a community sans a sincere leader lending credence to self-effacement and given to self-sacrifice, holding self-centredness in abhorrence, can't stand hostile tide of life and without a press the genuine voice stands altogether muzzled and stifled. These are the three inter-related necessities, especially now when the seat-belts are being fastened for a leap into the twenty-first century.

So what to do? Every ailment has treatment, no doubt efficacious. But the treatment is to be pressed into service.

Who will manage the treatment to the deadly malaise eating imperceptibly into the vitals of the K. P. Community and for whom?

It is the youth of today, themselves the healer and themselves the sufferer.

It sounds paradoxical and highly flabbergasting that even now when the treachery and sabotage have reached the climax, the K. P. Youth don't muster up the temerity to stand on their feet, consolidate themselves into one man, own and implement a fresh and radical programme squaring with the situation and make themselves felt not only within, but nationally and internationally too. K. P. is the crown and the ornament of the nation; let him once again make an exercise in self-assertion and making himself felt.

What is our submission and request to the youth of the community whether in Kashmir or outside, is to take up the initiative and wrest it from the polluted and the corrupt, the senile and the aged, and evolve a lofty and formidable programe in the direction of the total weal and amelioration and resurgence of the community.

Nothing is hard to achieve and accomplish if the resting on the oars is cried halt to. Indolence and unwanted lethargy is highly obnoxious and bane of the sprouting progeny and the scintillating dreams of the today's youth. One crowded hour of glorious life / Is worth an age without a name.

My youthful friends, seek and strive and stop not till the goal is reached. Despair not, as the despair is the crushing factor and formidably unsettling and unhinging in effect.

To apprise the youth and the community-units in Kashmir and outside of it of what our leaders have done in the field, I am starting with Shri Kashyapbandhu and closing with the present ones who constitute a voice, though not palpable.

I don't reck a bit if anybody gets displeased by my impressions; I can't conceal the facts and will treat them exclusively on the basis of merit. But let youngmen be informed and treated to the description todate.

The gentlemen-leaders, as it were, incorporated in this study are named in its contents. The information about them is

based on my personal knowledge in one or two cases, or more, and in the bulk on my inquiry, contacts with the people of different shades and also recorded and written and documented material concerning such cases.

This endeavour becomes imperative for me, simply in the exclusive interests of the youth of the community and the community-members inside and outside, to enable them to do what the great Omar Khayyam long ago envisioned :

Ah, Love ! Could thou and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,

Would not we shatter it to bits — and then
Remould it nearer to the Heart's Desire !

O. N. KAK

Kashyapbandhu

The great reformer of the K. Pandits was extant until a little time ago, floundering between exasperating loneliness and the failing health on one side and the inveterate stamina to be up and doing to the end and a leader's pride not to capitulate to the bludgeonings of inexorable time, on the other. The great Bandhu when interviewed by this writer appeared a picture of sadness bejewelled with wreaths of intermittent smile and pleasant repartee.

Bandhu has been the only leader except for another one...... Sheonarayan Fotedar......who stood the test of time and rendered pioneering and historical role worth remembering and cherishing. He is not known for having misutilised, grabbed, defalcated any sums of the community money in the direction of a self-boost. The great stalwart's bleak house in his village of Noorpora, (Geru) wearing a glum look for desertions and wanton neglect to which its chief inmate stood consigned, is a mute testimony to his deep love for his village people, Muslims, Pandits, Sikhs alike, and scoff for rude and inane ostentation and stifling modernity.

The continued thread of incoming and outgoing villagers, his confiding to them his problems, exchanging of confidences with them, his rural setting and orginality, and other non-descript features marking his stay in his old house totally unrelated to modern equipment and gadgets, land one into a deep contemplation of this great man of ours.

His work in the direction of the weal of his community has been splendid and free from stains and stigma that others following him, have attracted to themselves. Pity that this unthankful K. P. community, altogether unmoved by his heart-rending plight whereto he stood to the last exposed had done nothing to buttress him, render his existence a little convenient, introduce a little sunshine to his senile and helpless being and minister to his day-to-day requirements and urges.

That a leader of such a stature in any other community, would, at his stage of life, subjected to wanton neglect and apathy, bereft of fellow-feeling, deserted and discarded and forsaken, facing the buffets of hostile tide manfully, bending to every breeze but not breaking in tempest, have found a tremendous and wholehearted and whole-souled response from his community numbers, I am entirely sanguine. If such a top-leader of K. Ps should suffer and live on sufferance in such a way as was discerned, what can be the fate of lesser people who have staggered and tumbled half-way and returned to their grooves after looting and pillaging the community to boot? But they rule the roost and continue by hook or by crook to fish in troubled waters, unscathed and with total impunity, brazenly blaring the trumpet of monopoly, as though they aren't at all accountable for their vile practices. What shall we speak of the corrupt dacoit gentlemen-leaders who scrupled and scruple not to effect a sell-out of the chunks of land attached to cremation grounds, grabbing the entire sale-proceeds, and then, rearing their obnoxious heads again, browse on the much-ransacked Pandit leas? I, in the light of what obtains, can't help feeling the community is moribund, and its youth sunk in somnolence.

Let me revert to Bandhuji. He says: "I was a perennial rover, a wanderer, a fugitive, sans a home and home-warmth and comfort (Khanaviran). But I was self-confident. A notable writer of that day, 'Illah', wrote in reference to me that I had pen, speech and roving stamina and that as a satirist I was a model of Kashmir.

"Despite my alignment and association with the Y. Sabha and Kashmiri-Pandits, I was nowise reckoned a communalist or partially-inclined.

"I was generally against monarchial dispensations.

I am the founder of Sharika-Sammelan, Sharika-Mohalla, Sharikawar (Sunday), Sharikaangan (Hari-Parbat), Sharikabhawan, (Shitalnath Shrine) and the like."

I would like the readers to know that I write, such as above or below respecting Kashyapbandhu because I whole-

heartedly and unreservedly lend my personal credence thereto. Were I not doing so, I would demur and withdraw.

In his days, when his leadership assumed formidable proportions, the sky would rend with reverberating slogans: Jai Jai Kashyapbandhu. A small boy that I was then, I would feel elated and excited, but relapsed into puerile coyness.

The much-resorted, ringing, sky-rending cry was: Sharika-angan, Sharikawar, Sangathan Shakti Jai Jai Kar; Jai Kara, Har Har Mahadev dates back to his glorious times, when mass-awakening and revolutionary fervour dawned upon K. Pandits.

Bandhu held faith in the efficacy of an organisation. He said that for a community or a group, a forum, a leader and a platform were vital for its survival.

His fifth slogan was Hindu-Muslim Ithad.

Mr. Bandhu was the founder of the historical erstwhile Martand, an Urdu daily, representative in particular of the K. P. community. This paper through conspiracies and vile play, has become extinct sans seemingly any hope of re-emergence, unless a radical transformation in the community takes place and that can't be effected so long as shark-leaders given to corruption and fraudulent ways impinging heavily on the community are there clinging to the exalted positions in a monopolistic spirit.

His association with Y. Sabha raised its esteem in the eyes of all and sundry, and nowise was it reckoned a communal body, but an organisation directed to the resurgence of all shades of people.

He never toed the Maharaja line, albeit the latter himself was highly liberal in outlook.

In his period Y. Sabha declaration, among others, ran to the effect that all religious shrines of Muslims under the Government occupation should be restored to them; that any

step by the Muslim Conference in the direction of the amelioration of Kashmir would receive Y. Sabha support; that in the event of a dispute between Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims, a negotiated solution burying rancour and dudgeon would be evolved; that so far as the K. P. community was concerned, it was loyal to the Maharaja and it would be in the fitness of things that the Maharaja accelerated the tempo of democratic rule so that the law and order side returned to the normal track.

These pronouncement didn't commend themselves to the then State Prime Minister, Harikrishen Koul, who retaliated in declaring Bandhu's wife as disloyal subject.

Bandhuji says that he once went to see Prime Minister H. K. Koul who in his talk with him remained oblivious that he was talking to the one arrested in Saunders murder case. When asked by the Prime Minister why Y. Sabha embarked upon such a revolutionary course as demanding a democratic set-up, he said in reply that the demand was of K. Ps., of the Y. Sabha, not his personal. This reply silenced the P. M. outwardly, but inwardly nursed revenge.

During Bandhu's time when he presided over the Sabha dispensations, there was a network of Y. Sabha branches throughout the length and breadth of the valley, humming with activity and life, bubbling with verve and zeal to conform to Bandhu expectations. Meetings on mass scale covering multitudinous community problems were held three days a week.

Shri Baudhu was a unique leader to introduce successfully Saree dress in the beautiful K. P. women-folk who just at his bidding cast off their uncouth "Pehran" and waist-sash and primitive head-dress and thus aligned themselves sartorially with the mainstream of Indian social life. As of now, the young attractive K. P. ladies displaying the Saree-frippery, moving about smart and brisk, must feel beholden to this great innovator in Kashyapbandhu who till recently when the death overtook him, was down of luck, neglected and uncared for, and unheard-of!

Today's embroidered "Noori Pehran", in use currently among young women, radically different in cut from that of the old one, is a fashion-symbol in winter in Kashmir. Tall beautiful women in this garment look exuberant, more so when the loose dense strands of their hair lingeringly fall down their shoulders.

K. Bandhu has been the pioneer and initiator of the widow-remarriage. He trod the ground which hither-to had remained unbeaten. And the great ones, the towering ones, do face risks, court suffering, but, unmindful, do something exemplary and enviable.

And he has certainly incarnadined the Y. Sabha flag with his blood once, in reverence for it.

But Bandhuji, subsequently, shed the Y. Sabha garment to don the needed one of National Conference of S. M. Abdullah and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad. It was not to turn back on Y. Sabha or the K. P. community, nor an opportunistic move, but to spur his community to join the nationalist movement surging within and without. So, here, K. Pandits provided no chance to anybody to harbour that they were reactionaries, but forward-looking with a larger perspective about the events to take shape in future.

K. Bandhu joined the programme—revolutionary National Conference when the Indian independence movement raged most vigorously and palpably outside of Kashmir rocking the foreign-rule foundations thunderingly. Nehru felt happy over this liberal K. P. outlook represented by no less a man than Bandhuji himself.

In the year 1947, during the unprecedented communal carnage unleashed in the wake of the birth of Pakistan resulting from India's partition, the tribal hordes from Pakistan let-loose on the gentle and innocent and peaceful Kashmiris, wrought havoc, inflicted barbarities and perpetrated unparalleled savagery on women and men of religions and faiths other than their own. And in this hour of calamitous and catastrophic travail ti was Abdullah's National Conference which delivered the

goods most befittingly and squarely. The designs of the marauders were repulsed and Kashmir, as of before, continued to be an integral part of India.

The Y. Sabha leaders after Bandhu, feigning and faking affinity with the Pandit-community and its cause, sensing a grave danger from Pakistan, left bag and baggage in the interests of their self-safety, leaving this fragile community at the mercy of the heaven. But National Conference emerged as a triumphant saviour of both Muslims and Pandits and whereas gory games outside, in the name of religion, took a heaviest human toll, Kashmir emerged above all this ugly demonstration of human-killings and massacre and like a great messiah S. Abdullah, and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad and others and Kashyapbandhu diffused most efficaciously the message of peace and fraternity and communal rapport and peaceful Kashmiris responded wholeheartedly: Sher-i-Kashmir Ka Kya Irshad? Hindu Muslim Sikh Ithad.

It was Bandhuji who represented the K. P. community in the higher echelons and thoroughly brought within the understanding of all that K. Ps. had not lagged behind others in the march towards a new order.

Prior, to him, K. P. bridegrooms would carry sword and other redundant accoutrements with them to their in-laws on marriage functions, but the reformist in Bandhu considering it to be an unwieldy encumbrance had it replaced by modern bridal items.

Kashyapbandhu spoke nostalgically and admiringly of the Alikadal Sabha-unit workers. They had been so during Fotedar's time too. I am proud of being originally the resident of Bulbullankar, Alikadal, for the workers whereof he had a word of praise. Whereas I was too small to grasp the personality of Bandhuji, Fotedar's oratory and humour penetrated my being in my youthful days to the point of my holding him in great esteem.

Kashyapbandhu re-entered the Sabha premises after a long

spell of fortysix years, i.e. 1982. Its dilapidated plight threw him into the quagmire of utter chagrin and dismay; its pathetically sordid plight hurt him beyond measure; generated pain within him. The historical premises which was vibrant with activity and life in his period presented to him a hideous scene of utter neglect; its desolate and barren look engendered ague within him; Y. Sabha headquarters is currently sans a type-machine, duplicating machine, articles of furniture and furnishings: *their disappearance is linked to theft and loot by our today's gangster-leaders whom the* peaceful K. P. youth yet tolerate on the scene. In any other community such broad-daylight robbers are fleeced and roasted alive. But our community knows only to be faithful palanquin-bearers, and nothing beyond.

Kashyapbandhu's mien and appearance immediately prior to his demise in the mid-December of 1985, puts me in mind of Shakespeare's King Lear whose harangues and loud tantrums in his wanderings convey tragedy and our Bandhu was now a saga of tragedy, albeit the spark of near-spent stamina did manifest itself when ignited by persons of affable import.

In place to state that when he re-entered his Y. Sabha chief office, witnessing its state he did sigh out: Apnay Kabi Kay Rangmahal Main Jo Hum Gaye / Ankhay Ubal Padee Dar-u-Diwar Daikh Kar.

Sheonarayan Fotedar

Mr. Fotedar, as per reports, was a professor in a college of Jammu, after doing his post-graduation. Under the impact of rising tide of K. P. problems he left service, or had to leave it as it was a leave-arrangement.

He found a wholehearted response from the K. P. community inasmuch as the disappearance from the Sabha scene of Bandhu had created a vacuum which needed to be filled and Fotedar's appearance heartened the community and re-lit their dismal horizon.

His personal traits, charming deportment, oratory and other capabilities coupled to his educational merit provided him a ready slot in the community.

For a very sufficient stint of time he was the unquestioned leader; his role in the Sabha was facilitated by his reported spirit of sacrifice as during the Sabha's penurious plight he is reported to have parted with his personal belongings in cash and kind to salvage the dwindling Sabha resources.

Mr. Narayan himself fell victim to indigent conditions, but continued to serve the community, unmindful of and unbroken by the recalcitrant forces, accidental or deliberate. Like a wounded lion he would nurse his inner woe manfully, but nowise betray any signs of his deep anguish surging his bosom. He would some time, as did Dean Swift, writhe in impotent rage and swallow scorns. Poor great Sheonarayan! while the tempo of talk with him was gaining momentum, one would discern his tear-filled eyes, but tears he would prevent from leaving his blue eyes, as he did his pain from being known to others.

Fotedar was a K. P. letter and spirit; no extraneous lure would tempt him into denigrating his community or sabotaging it unlike a horde of leaders as it were who damaged it unrelentingly, savagely, mercilessly and most disgracefully.

That he was instrumental to a large extent in raising his community's prestige during his period of Sabha activity, can scarce be impugned; any extraneous attempt at stigmatising or libelling it would meet a stout rebuff from him; he would thunder, and in forceful oratorical bouts would cut the resistant audience to size, humble them, and sweep to sides the dust, ash and residue of opposition.

This writer has seen him many a time at his original residence of Sehyar, Nawakadal, in an inhospitable and near-unsightly and un-inviting room, poor items of furniture, upholstery and the like. But the countenance of Fotedar radiated warmth and comfort. It was a treat to be beside him for a brief or a longer stint; he was tremendously humorous and caused one to be momentarily oblivious of one's problems and vexation; thereafter he would relapse into reticence for minutes uninterruptedly and cater to his inner smarts, punctuating his succeeding verbal sprees with sigh and pause.

Crowds of youth and others with their respective problems, mostly those of trainings and services, would cling to him and he sans inhibitions did their work; telephone some, forward recommendatory communications to others, simply to minister to the varied needs of his visitors whose visitations centred round their own problems to the exclusion of all others.

From the Sehyar residence he would infrequently and when the situation warranted, go to the Sabha premises at Shitalnath and in presidential capacity would remove tangles and complications and lubricate the Sabha machinery to render it functional and operational.

Janamaashtami festival was an occasion of hectic activity and mobility in his days; as K. Bandhu had all praise till his death for the Alikadal workers, Fotedar could not render this occasion a befitting show sans the cooperation of the Alikadal volunteers and activists who verily would lend colour and life to it and render it a most attractive mosaic representative of K. P. community.

In the processions he would be in the centre, floral garlands presented by the people on the procession-route around his neck; like a hero he would be the centre of sight; he would beckon the road-side viewers to join the throng and they unhesitatingly did it.

And at the terminus-venue he would deliver speech, highlighting the importance and essence of the day. And the reverberating cry of Shri Fotedar Zindabad would rend the sky.

Fotedar was greatly unpredictable; sometimes he would be in one of his finest moods, wafting aroma and sunshine of his wit and eloquence; sometimes his histrionics and outbursts of petulance coupled to tantrums and bouts of anger would generate fright; howsoever much one would wish to meet his wild argumentative force by a counter query, one would not, as that straightaway meant to set more and more ablaze the furnace of his impetuosity; but beneath all such display of temper was a compassionate heart, transparent sincerity and a ready response to allay the suffering on an indiscriminate basis.

The greatest merit of his person was his total unwillingness to estrange himself from the community; no lure of power or post would dupe him into being a saboteur of his community; he would stake all mundane paraphernalia and hold aloft the community prestige.

In the noted Parmeshwari episode, he displayed his grit and tapped the inner reserves of his unwavering resolution by standing by his inveterate commitment to his community; the latter mayn't have conformed to his expectations; it may not have stood by him through his vicissitudes; it may have been ridiculously oblivious of his plight; may have turned their back on his call to them to rouse into action; but he, in return, didn't any time evince sign of receding allegiance to them.

As for the Parmeshwari case, Fotedar declared in unmistakable, unambiguous terms in the state legislature that he was a patriot, a nationalist, a well-wisher of Kashmir, but that least connoted his swerving from the path he had carved and chosen for him for more than thirty years of his life and that

it was not meet that an indigent girl be exploited and let marry outside his religion, generating dismay and consternation and feelings of insecurity and instability in the Kashmiri minority community which S. Abdullah always glorified and extolled. The constitutional support for this liberalism may be there in theory, he further added, but that least implied injuring the religious susceptibilities of the K. P. community. Mr. Sadiq, that time at the helm of affairs, took all this confusion and hurt deliberately administered to the Pandits, in his strides and connived with the whole sordid show, how the Pandit youth became the target of police firing, how the young women-precessionists were rained lathis on their heads, their faces stained with blood but yet raising militant slogans demonstrating their solidarity and wholesale support for Parmeshwari's restoration to the community. Sadiq G. M. reclined against the constitutional beam in this matter, but flouted it whenever it suited his propensity; despite his being called an abhorrent of communalism and sectional bent of mind by his limited number of fans, whereof he himself also raised trumpet, this writer holds a different view of him which it is not within the scope of this study to make a recountal of.

Shri Fotedar paid the price of ministerial post for sticking to his principles; he never was given a position in the state cabinet lest he arrayed a more formidable size of Pandit Youth around him to pose a problem to the government of the day.

He became the chairman of the Legislative Council and this assignment he discharged with meticulous care, ceremony, assiduity, ability and grace. It was,O,a treat to enter his chambers while he was the upper-house chief, ceremony walking before and after him, all the assortment of decent-looking things at their places, glittering and glamorous. The council library was a model to view and its today's state is a departure from its past splendour.

In the sessions his presence as chairman was elevating and inspiriting. His ruling while the session was on, was, again, a treat, worth attention and admiration. He was a dominant figure in the organisational sittings or the council deliberations... a Triton among minnows.

Fotedar never let inferiority-complex overtake him because he was not inferior. The most formidable and international political figures who came to Kashmir and had contacts and liaison with him failed to subdue him; he was an all-rounder who enacted his part on every front altogether splendidly and glamorously; I remember his once being visited by no less a man than Dr. Saif-u-din Kitchlu at his official residence. The dignitary was inordinately impressed by the oratorical excellence and at the moment of departure thanked him warmly for having descanted upon the Kashmir political imbroglio in an able manner.

The greatest flaw that never left him to the last was his reluctance to impart political character to the Sabha, albeit the situation demanded it sans demur or dithering. I am yet unable to fathom what his motive behind this expedient was. K. P. community that time had only one organisation and that was the State Y. Sabha; to subject it mercilessly to feelings of wanton deprivation, was verily cruel and iniquitous to the community of Kashmiri-Pandits. A political programme and action-plan would positively have elevated the prestige of our community, enabling it to mount pressures on the executive despotism to bring it round to conceding many a demand, no doubt genuine. Such a formidable figure as Fotedar should not have featured in such a dastardly and unbecoming manner. A Y. Sabha with a political base and a radical constitution involving dynamic politics, aligning and identifying itself with a broad political spectrum linked to the Pandit minority would be the need of the hour and of all times, but it could not be so......why, remains yet unfathomable and a mystery......stark and baffling.

The field of the Sabha, as such, was restricted and claustral; no scope for the youth, their ever-multiplying and multitudinous problems. Its programme remained, sad as it is, dull and drab, excepting for occasional brief spells of processions, meetings and the like. Fotedar's stamina and grit, capabilities and acumen definitely militated with his supine and inert and sluggish organisation which reared its head sometime, drew mass of youth to it harbouring some programme and then,

shamelessly, ducked it down, leaving the youth in the lurch and darkling. All this notwithstanding, Fotedar stands as a valuable public figure.

Whereas he cannot escape this blemish, he stands enshrined in the Pandit hearts for his always being one with them; he never said that he represented the toiling masses of Kashmir and that K. Ps. should take to boat-towing, public-toilet cleansing and the like, unmindful of the political science canons that minorities everywhere in the world are apprehensive by virtue of their being numerically limited and that they merit recognition and concessional dispensations.

That K. Ps. should deliberately have been deprived of a political organisation of their own is a tragedy the effects whereof remain lingering hitherto. A mere social organisation, catering to only dowry and marriage and remarriage and widow-marriage problems is an anachronism and needs to be done away with......sooner, the better.

I cannot help harbouring that by being let groan under the obnoxious load of deprivations reflected in not making the political character available to the age-old, aeons-old, Sabha, K. P. community has been inordinately and immeasurably wronged, possibly irretrievably.

It is left to the sprouting youth to don their Y. Sabha with a political raiment, or else it rates a closure, lock, stock and barrel, as to have no organisation is decidedly better than the one only in name and nothing else save it, non-political and non-functional.

Dr. S. N. Peshin

We have a so-called leader in Dr. S. N. Peshin. There cannot be two opinions that the leaders of his stamp and proclivities are tolerated in a meek community as that of Kashmiri-Pandits. No group of people, an organised mass of humans, can accommodate such a man; it has already been stated that K. Ps. are by nature adaptable; but it is not a plus point every time, especially in matters of choosing a leader. The most paradoxical point is that whereas he stands unerringly indicted by the public bar, he summons the temerity to flout each and every norm wherewith is linked the weal of the community; he rides roughshod over the suggestions, particularly when they are calculated to make him account for his wanton acts of incredible culpability. He does unpardonable wrongs, but yet brazenly resorts to palpable retorts flung in the direction of those who intend to question him and finally are silenced by his handful of obnoxious lackeys whose material wellbeing is connected with his.

Peshin has been a rank opportunist every time, at every stage of his ignominious life.

During the celebrated Quit Kashmir movement, he half-heartedly sided with it, dodging and hoodwinking its initiators, as S. M. Abdullah and others of the ilk. He issued posters to the effect that he never subscribed to the movement for Kashmir liberation raging alongside of the Indian Independence movement. This was an act of stark sabotage by the impostor, but yet Abdullah's liberal attitude did not take any cognisance of this treachery to the cause.

Consequent upon the triumphant end of the Sate Independence movement he was favoured by the administration with his installation as the Director of the State Medical services. No sooner did he take charge of it than he embarked upon the vicious policy of victimisation and endeavouring every way

to humble, disgrace, denigrate and browbeat even the top medical personnel who as physicians and surgeons had attracted tremendous reputation.

He was sent for training abroad to further his professional ability by the Abdullah Government. On its completion he started playing nefariously treacherous role against his very benefactor......Abdullah, but still the liberalism of the Sheikh didn't take any notice of it, or else such perfidy would definitely have resulted in his being booted out, unceremoniously.

Inasmuch as teasing and troubling is his inveterate wont he left the National Conference and insidiously sought a slot in the Y. Sabha, then under the Fotedar hegemony.

He got an opportunity after opportunity to meet the K. P. crowds, converse with them and finally succeeded in finding a mooring to pursue his nefariously diabolical designs all aimed at self-aggrandisement to the exclusion of the redressal of genuine community grievances and tangles.

In stark self-expansion bid Peshin embarked upon the project of raising funds for the purchase of Martand press and building a shed therefor. The gullible pandits offered massive subscriptions amounting to over two lakhs; to silence them a mud-shed was raised in the Y. Sabha premises, but no press. The meek approaches and entreaty to him to go in for a printing press as vital to the smooth and uninterrupted publication of the now-dead Martand sans any further procrastination yielded rebuke and grossly defiant attitude. In this endeavour this writer has raised massive sums from my area of Alikadal etc. for their faithful transmission to the presiding deity of cash collections. We sidetracked our main pursuit of studies and jumped into the fray of raising sums of money, eager as we were to accoutre the Martand paper with a press. Some sizeable cash was entrusted to him by me too, against a proper receipt from him which is yet extant with me for its production when needed.

These massive sums are yet unaccounted for. In a palpable campaign of some groups against such misdoings of Peshin, pressure, of course very mild, was mounted upon him to return

the fortune to the community. He took all this lifeless ado, knowing as he does that K. P. protests are not revolutionary in character, nor exacting in nature, in his strides, bided, away the time, but confessed to his being in possession of more than two-lakh rupees plus the interest amount thereon for such a long time. Strange that he doesn't yet part with the community fortune centred in him, nor is there any efficacious and dynamic K. P. pressure group or a party to force him into its return. But is it not highly criminal on his part to behave in such a way and yet raise the bogey of being a leader of K. Ps. ?

He has for a very very long time been presiding over the affairs of the National Hospital near Karannagar, Srinagar, in a most clandestine way. The reports of shady deals have flowed in ; the hospital plight has recklessly deteriorated sans any improved prospects for its staff which by him is construed as little short of bonded labour. The Hospital has no modern equipment and whatever it had, has, doubtless, been smuggled out to his private hospital at Dehradun where his doctor sons who through the recommendation of S. N. Fotedar to Bakshi Ghulam Mohamad were taken for medical training, are stationed. If need be stated that Peshin, whereas he was throughout antagonistic to Fotedar, would toe his line when some personal interests were to be furthered. He maligned and hurled calumny on him in secret, but would before him be a perfect stooge. Fotedar, liberal of thought as he was, would lend credibility to him.

A few years ago a deal was reported to be in the offing whereunder Peshin wanted to sell out the hospital building and flee like a dacoit bag and baggage. But timely stir here and there in the Pandit community worked as a deterrent.

Shame be upon them, upon those few stooges of his, who reckon him as the K P. leader. He is the one who during very noted Parmeshwari episode (a Pandit girl got converted to Islam volitionally) resulting in lathi charges, cane charges, arrests and Governmental persecution against K. P. male-female processionists demonstrating against the Governmental callousness and intolerable apathy, acted anti-community way. It culminated

in several community youth falling martyr to the cause and a number of them getting seriously injured and needing hospitalisation.

The vile Peshin refused admission to the community hospital—National Hospital, raised with the massive Pandit donations and of some philanthropists—to bleeding and dying youth who needed instant treatment. I wonder and it constitutes a paradox within me how Peshin refused admission, how he shut the National Hospital doors to the dying youngmen, floundering between life and death as a consequence of ruthless Police shoot-out. Kudos be to the Ratanrani Hospital authorities who rose to the occasion and responded to the community call by their incessant action in the direction of timely and speedy treatment to the sufferers. Who can put up with such a criminal attitude on the part of one who feigns to be a leader? It is only our Pandits and none else, be it remembered, as such pests are not afforded berth on the soil of the earth.

Peshin has, through a surfeit of conciet, egoism and self-centredness, never been able to adjust himself anywhere, excepting for where he feels his self-interests are in jeopardy. There he will, dominated by the self-considerations, enact like a road-side mendicant and when the self-interests have been answered fully and thoroughly, will re-emerge successively with added vanity, rodomontading, and embark upon the game of bluff, snubbing, rebuffs and the like plus all that constitutes misdemeanour, shady transaction, rabid avarice, mundane temptations, to the extent of not sparing even the community assets whatever they be in residue now, after a thorough ransack.

Shri Harjilal Raina, a public figure, was elected President of the all State K. P. Conference; he out of naivete took Peshin into confidence by offering him an opening in the Sabha as a member. The latter with his characteritic wont proceeded with his inveterate, endemic spree of questioning his authority and position as the president and conspired with his dirty coterie to oust him. Harjilal could subsequently construe what stamp Peshin was of. Poor great Raina was pestered and

plagued day in and day out and when he felt that Raina was hard to be dislodged, Peshin brought about a mighty split by starting a parallel organisation, assisted and abetted by his accomplices.

Harjilal died a sad death hastened by the unalloyed treacherous behaviour of Peshin.

Peshin is currently the so-called President of the All State K. P. Conference, having mounted the pedestal through an artifice of fraud, manipulation, disruption, factionalism, prevarication and wholesale vilification and maligning unleashed against Raina. He didn't scruple to label Raina as old, decrepit, palsied man unfit to hold the organisational reins, concealing his culpable and heinous role towards his community. But concealing—how far and how much? Despite his unwarranted and criminal stay in the Sabha, people in general and interested ones in particular, fully know him and his transactions. His rebuffing and snubbing willn't carry him far; he will necessarily have to appear before the public-bar and account for what he has been doing to damage and sabotage the community cause.

Peshin, besides all this black scroll of misdeeds, has no any type of oratory, nor can he express himself in black and white; he cannot speak out things convincingly; he sits in the organisational meetings like a dummy, but is a pastmaster in secret, surreptitious, devious schemes calculated to destroy and not to construct.

He in complicity with his detestable coterie announced elections to the Sabha Presidency in the preceding year. Many a contestant entered the fray. Sensing his downfall, he with his characteristic evil propensities deferred it, in total violation of standing rules and regulations. Thus no elections took place and the Peshin rule dumped upon the community continues unabated. His dictum is that people may want him or not want him, he would not part with the Sabha presidency. Such is our Dr. S. N. Peshin who yet, despite a weight of dark deeds perpetrated by him upon the credible community members oppressing sore the fragile shoulders of K. P. palanquin—bearers, is let continue with his pleasure-spree of grab, graft, thus

further impoverishing the depleted Pandit resources—thereby serving his exclusive cause of personal expansion.

As a surgeon he can't keep abreast of the latest marvelling strides in the field of surgery; primitive type of instruments, outworn and totally outdated, he yet uses resulting in the complaints not getting cured; what he is conspicuous for in his profession of surgery is his ejecting the cases even from the operation theatre if the payments do not conform to his ever-soaring avarice standards and demands.

Gopikishenji

He is not extant. There can be no doubt that his contribution to the community cause has been somewhat formidable and splendid. He was a magnetic personality, sturdy build ef body and highly cultivated mind.

Consequent upon his feeling frustrated over the dubious functioning of the Y. Sabha, he founded a very efficiently-run organisation, Samaj Sudhar Samiti (S.S.S.).

It is known for having rendered commendable service to the community. The building has a dramatic hall exhibiting material and shows conducive to the community cause. It has, besides, a wing where intending womenfolk and those fallen on evil days and down on luck, facing pecuniary hardships, find vocational opportunities to eke out their existence.

This premises houses Ramakrishna Ashram, a laboratory, a splendid library, all under the roof of R. K. Ashram, ministering to the needy in a meticulously splendid manner.

Gopikishen was a revolutionary, the trait which no-wise permits me to be oblivious of him, his fertile brain, his imposing personality and his coherent powerful oratory.

His ardent longing was to infuse revolutionary character amongst the community members, but this mission of his generally aborted for want of adequate response, driven and goaded as this community was and is by mutually antagonistic forces. Slowly his zeal, as does of everybody, abated and he preferred segregation to cultivate his spiritual side which attracted name and fame for him not only nationally, but internationally too. His book on 'Kundalini' is beautifully written, recounting his experiences and experiments in respect of this serpent power. Very illustrious national papers have carried articles on his 'Kundalini' power and his life.

During his life-tenure an English daily and an Urdu daily

were brought out, highlighting the community problems. With his demise such activities have grown paralysed and moribund. S.S.S. is now a bleak presentation of inaction, sluggishness, inertia and nothing else beyond it. The redeeming feature in the premises is the functional R. K. Ashram.

In Gopikishen's S.S.S. very historical meetings of K. Ps. have taken place, very important deliberations and decisions have seen the light of the day. Its scintillating programmes during his life definitely constituted a mightly disturbing factor for the Governmental authorities.

Mr. Kishen courted arrest in the Parmeshwari case; he was lodged in the Srinagar jail subjected to the jail regimen. I feel none else courted arrest out of the leader-rung; others delivered inflammatory speeches in the Shitalnath premises, raised the tempo of audience and finally returned to the cosy shell of domestic warmth after partaking of the booty collected from the Pandits on the pretext of restoring the girl and representing the case before the Indian Prime Minister. And when Mrs. Indira Gandhi allowed them audience, they, headed by P. N. Gasi of Sathu, Srinagar, totally bungled to the indignation of the P. M.

Were he yet living, possibly the condition of S.S.S. would definitely have been different. Peace be to his soul!

But before I conclude here, I suggest to the community to utilise the funds of S. S. S. (with whom they are, I don't know) for some efficacious purpose.

Shyamlal Saraf

Shyamlal Saraf was one another gentleman-leader having escalated to the position of a minister during the first S. M. Abdullah ministry and later Bakshi Ghulam Mohmmad's regime

He is reported to have dabbled in K. P. affairs being voiced and aired from the Y. Sabha forum, but is not alleged to have made any dent.

He went to the N. Conference and there played a satisfactory role and courted arrest and hardships for the liberation cause, one amongst many K. Ps. to have been persecuted and hounded for siding with the Quit Kashmir movement.

There is no evidence to the effect that he has any time of his life stood by the K. P. cause or represented their case at the higher echelons. But all this notwithstanding, he remains a factor to be respected to an extent inasmuch as he tore away loose from the rigid conventional norms, unmindful of the reactions and repercussions and joined the mainstream of Kashmir politics.

Saraf was a virtual nincompoop for Pandit community as his being in successive cabinets was of no avail for them.

One more foible I have personally discerned in him was his mendacity; he would to please momentarily one, speak out to him mendacity—based things thus fuelling him with hope, hope and hope. But naturally, later on, the myth of hope building would explode.

If it be true that in his possession were huge sums of money obtained from the sell-out of lands of cremation grounds he stands yet condemned and subjected to high-rate pillory.

How he could sell sizeable chunks of cremation grounds' land, is a riddle and absolutely paradoxical; who allowed him such an anti-community deal and concentrate the sale-proceeds within himself is highly surprising.

I would request in all solemnity Shri Saraf's descendants to hand over the funds derived from such a sell-out to some truly charitable mission. as Ramakrishna Mission, as in current Pandit-organisations credibility and reliability is totally absent.

Jialal Kilam

Kilam was a man of high reputation in Kashmir. As an advocate and a Justice of the State high court he stands out as unique figure. Through the exercise of his inimitable wit and high-rate oratorical force he during his scintillating life-career endeared himself to all and sundry, irrespective of anything.

He had a commanding personality and when viewed from a distance would radiate inspiration. He would appear to be a conqueror bound to tame and humble his adversaries through his apparant high determination.

He is feared to have many Y. Sabha Presidential stints. But it is astounding he hasn't been able to impart it a radical and revolutionary temper. Such a gifted leader should have bequeathed to the posterity something to lean on, something to eternise him, something to feel proud of. But nothing like that in his repertoire.

That he was a blue-blooded K. P. can't be called into question. His books smack of his affinity with his community. If he hasn't performed any outstanding part to render his community beholden to him, he, neither, has betrayed it, in fact been a little tilted towards it.

He stood in rapport with S. M. Abdullah and his dynamic projects. His innate expediency forbade him from inviting wrath of the authorities. He would initiate a drama, fuel it inordinately for being staged and ultimately would go into hiding when confronted with peril. That should have not been his role, a gem of the community as he was.

As a man gifted with humour, he could scarce be matched. He would send audience into peals of convulsive laughter with his innate trait of pleasantries and humour-based variegated stories: he had the power of invention, concocting material and making it seem true.

Oh Janamashtami occasions, I would with great interest hear his wonderful speeches; they were full of appropriate and much-wanted fun and frolic, joy-generating and thought-fuelling. He would recite the Gita verses immaculately from the stage, and hold the listeners spell-bound.

No scandal of having piled up accumulations belonging to the community is centred around him.

But any type of laudable and worth-remembering service to the community he hasn't been able to render. As a matter of fact, he, a rare genius, should have been of any benefit to it, but it has not been so.

All this notwithstanding, he is feared to have spearheaded the famous Bread Movement and courted imprisonment.

Janardhan Teng

He has been a man of distinction, having played a conspicuous role in the Y. Sabha field.

I, when a small boy under teens verily, would straightaway feel gladdened on viewing his impeccable sartorial finesse, immaculate top to toe, a striped tightly coiled turban, laced furbished shoes matching his superstructure.

Kashyapbandhu confided to me when I interviewed him prior to his dissolution that Teng was chosed on the four-man panel by the community, one from which had to represent Pandits in the Glancy commission deliberations about the abject K. P. Plight. Glancy dropped him and opted for P. N. Bazaz, a very fit man to play second fiddle to Glancy.

Teng was not an orator of any outstanding merit, but at heart he very much wished the K. P. resurgence and amelioration. Some definite handicaps, as want of adequate community response or factionalism within the Sabha must have constituted a deterrent to his reformative schemes. Nevertheless, he was a gentleman of the first rank, least given to rodomontade and and the like.

After the 1947 upheaval manifested in tribal attack from Pakistan, Teng left Kashmir and settled at an inconspicuous place as Ramban as a practising lawyer.

The then state Prime Minister Mr. G. S. Ayyanger is reported to have visited his home at some function. Albeit that constitutes no plus point in the public life of his, yet Teng is reckoned a celebrity amongst the Pandit leaders of that day.

Teng held the presidency of the Bar Association which office he performed with great skill and dexterity and rectitude. His demise caused a palpable jolt in the Judicial faternity as demonstrated in the funeral oration by justice Jaswant Singh:

"He (Mr. Teng) was, as you may be knowing, an eminent counsel possessing extraordinary ability and very pleasing manners. He has also a distinguished political career and a dedicated record of service. He was the President of Bar Association, Srinagar Municipality, a member of State Praja Sabha, the president of the K.P.S.D. Sabha and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Central Cooperative Bank before partition,...... My brother DD Thakur had also the privilege of working with him as his Junior for a considerable time......"

Raizada Amarchand, Ex. Add. Advocate General J&K High Court spoke in admiration of Sh. Teng on his sad demise :

"Hon'ble Judges, Mr. President of the Bar Association and friends :

"I express my deep sense of sorrow on the passing away of Shri Janardhan Teng. He was a person who was well known for his many activities. I know him for the last more than 30 years. As a lawyer he was a good lawyer, he had been the member of Prajha Sabha and besides political activities, he had also made great contribution towards the social activities. With his passing away the Legal profession has suffered a great loss. I fully associate myself with all that has been said about him by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Jaswant Singh and Mr. S. P. Gupta, President, Bar Association, Jammu. I pray to God for peace to the departed soul and strength to his family members to bear this huge loss."

The then Bar Association President Shri S. P. Gupta had the following to speak in laudation of the deceased :

"The tidings of the sad demise of Pt. Janardhan Teng has given us a great shock. Pt. Janardhan was a great and leading advocate of the Srinagar Bar who had made great contributions towards the development of law during his life-time. Besides being a great advocate he was a patriot of the State who took great part in bringing about the uplift of the State, and he was also a member of Prajha Sabha. After 1947 he shifted to Ramban and started his practice there, where he not only contributed for the welfare of the litigants, but he rose

to an eminent position in the legal profession inasmuch as in that small place like Ramban he devoted much time in giving training to the new legal practioners, who joined the profession so much so that the members of the Ramban Bar were not second to any bar in the State in the profession and one specimen we find in Hon'ble Mr. Justice D. D. Thakur who belonged to that Bar and later on joined Jammu Bar and then rose to the exalted position he holds at present.

"It is the command of nature to which we have to bow and have to bear it without any murmur. We have no words to express the great loss which has been caused not only to the State but to the profession and I on my own behalf and on behalf of the members of the bereaved family pray that his soul may rest in peace."

Shri Teng was closely associated with the Lt. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, one of the most renowned men of India, both professionally and politically. This mutual rapport between the two legal luminaries, both Kashmiri Pandits, reflected high legal acumen of Teng.

Teng stood wholeheartedly by the celebrated Durganag agitation and underwent suffering. He was one of the first trustees of Durganag shrine and discharged this office meticulously efficiently.

He evinced no less interest in the establishment of Gandhi Memorial College, then Hindu College. He liberally donated to the cause of the education, for which he deserves special kudos.

During the noted Bread Movement Teng didn't lag behind and unreservedly jumped into the fray. He represented the Pandit cause before the celebrated legal luminaries of India and convined them thoroughly of the wrongs whereto Pandits were exposed.

G. S. Ayyangar, the then Prime Minister, was highly appreciative of him for his calibre and legal distinction and unalloyed probity.

P. N. Bazaz

We have in our repertoire a very conspicuous Pandit leader, P. N. Bazaz by name.

As an author, several works of repute stand to his credit. I think he has authored more than six books, two whereof straightaway, effortlessly, afford us an insight into his mental propensities, that is, he had fattened himself at the expense of the Pandit society, his religion, religious shrines and his scriptures, especially the Gita. In his delineation of the Gita he goes to the brutish extent of holding it in utter derision, treating it to revilement and animadversion. This Gita which was the comfort and consolation of great Indologists as Romain Rolland, Max Mueller, Schopenhauer, Christopher Isherwood, Vivekananda's innumerable foreign disciples, and was and is so of teeming millions upon millions of its native adherents! Bazaz derides the prophet Srikrishna in his works.

In another of his anti-community traitrous works, he heaps mud on the historically-celerated shrine of Khirbhawani, dearer than life to crores upon crores of Hindus, and Kashmiri-Pandits. Possibly he didn't know while he lived his abominably disgraceful life, that at the Khirbhawani shrine no less a man than Vivekananda himself had a vision of mother-Goddess which altogether transformed his life and whereto he referred in several of his speeches at Calcutta and other places. The great spiritual dynamo as Swami Ramatirtha, too, had a glimpse of the divinity at no other shrine than that of Khirbhawani. He fell into trance here. Innumerable misery-stricken souls confronted with calamitous vicissitudes solicited redressal by their devoted prostrations here and, doubtless, secured it.

Our community has produced such units as the one under description who couldn't help using his intellect and pen in its wholesale denigration and disparagement. And yet this community of ours connived with all he did, permitting him

to build fortunes of vast immensities by perfidious postures which he is known for.

Howsoever erudition-gifited he might have been, he rates damnation and denunciation for doing everything that constituted infringement of the religious canons and irrevocable hurt to his community.

He, long ago, is reported to have represented the Pandit-community in the Glancy commission deliberations in connection with its grievances. K. P. Bread-Movement has become historically famous throughout the entire nation. Glancy is feared to have opted for him to be the Pandit representative out of the 4-member panel.

Bazaz played there second fiddle and, his domineering instinct of avarice and self-interest oveıtaking him, neatly sabotaged the community cause by confiding wrong things to Glancy and totally misrepresenting it, resulting in the Pandit agitation meeting a fiasco as it did. Thanks be to the dead Bazaz, at least from this writer.

During much-despised Janata rule in India, he endeavoured hard to be taken as a member in the State cabinet. Pandit-society, sensing the possible elevation of their inveterate traitor, raised a protest against this his likely boost. He as a consequence wasn't taken and Bazaz returned to his life's obnoxious theme, writhing in impotent rage like a poisoned rat in the hole.

He could, because he never would, never identify himself with his community save for in his name which was Premnath Bazaz and instead remained rooted in his un-ending desire of piling up bank-balances by fair or foul means.

Bazaz has been one of the first presidents of the Y. Sabha. It is said that in the beginning of deliberations and meetings he would recite the Gita and swear by it, so much he held it in esteem. But the same Bazaz, overpowered subsequently as he was by the weight of uncontrollable avarice to pile up fortunes directed at him by anti-national elements for his anti-community postures, treated this very Gita to incredible condemnation. Such was our Bazaz.

S. N. Dhar and S. K. Chakku

Both have been pleaders of the State, the former now extinct and the latter yet extant, albeit spent in energy and resourcefulness as an efficient lawyer.

Dhar wore a brilliant personality with commanding moustaches, bespeaking grace and virility. I fully remember his splendiferous gait of walking while on daily morning-walks on Idgah grounds with a staff in hand covering the distances as a combatant. His countenance, round face, winsom personality, bodily height, commensurate with his sturdy build, would draw me to surveying him top to toe almost daily on my rounds to the same grounds. Being a boy, I durst not talk to him, but glanced at and eyed him, again and again, and every time I did so, I felt pleased.

He had some spells of Gandi-College Srinagar presidency.

I have learnt reliably that he never was out of the Fotedar grip and as such could never rise to the Y. Sabha presidental-stature. The gentle peaceful Dhar possibly couldn't achieve he aspired and all the due meeds eluded him tragically for his whole life-spell.

He functioned as municipality president, but this spell of his is not conspicuous for any elaborate reformative measures.

He is feared to have donated a vast chunk of his home-library either to G. M. College, Srinagar, or to the Kashmir University.

Mr. Chakku has been and is a lawyer of no mean repute. Whether or not he happened to be the Sabha-president anytime, I havn't cared to enquire. The query could have become necessary if his being so had been marked by some revolutionary imprints mirroring his enterprising proclivities. Since nothing like that is in evidence, his presidential spell or otherwise becomes relegated to nothingness.

Currently he holds Vishwa-Bharati College—School complex presidency; as a leader I have never heard him speak to any audience, particularly anv Y. Sabha session or the like.

Despite his age, he appears near-smart, albeityet in a long coat, Pyjamas and a turban. He now limps, the defect resulting reportedly from some accident.

He hasn't been any outstanding personality professionally. What caused him attract fame to himself among the K. P. community is his association with Y. Sabha and chiefly with Sheonarayan. Anybody who clung passionately to Fotedar, would be the recipient of fame. So his fame is not his own, original, but borrowed.

Anyway let me pass on.

D. P. Dhar

To bypass Dhar...... albeit doing so isn't surprising, nor denying justice to the object of my description, inasmuch as he never was one with his community...... is to enact Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. Dhar was never a Pandit leader nor is he feared to have had any semblance of sympathy with them in their woes, troubles and vicissitudes. But he is not on record to have played any anti-community role excepting for his accelerating the tempo of transferring Parmeshwari to the permanent custody of her Muslim paramour.

During this Parmeshwari incident, he stood vehemently exposed to terrific denunciation and condemnation alike by young Pandit-women and-men, the former carrying in their hands the imitations of liquor bottles, crying "D. P. Whisky HAI HAI", symbolising Dhar's love for bouts of drinks. This male-female rally with Dhar as its main target did a commendable job, denoting solidarity with the cause.

He maintained reticence till he completed the assignment of passing on Parmeshwari to the unwarranted grip of her Muslim lover, whose amorous advances did find reciprocation, through the instrument of cashing in on her indigent plight.

I have only once heard his speech and that too, in the Assembly chambers; in Pandit gatherings, he was never visible, because he never chose to be present in one.

Dhar possessed verily a scintillating personality, a radiant gift of the gab punctuated with frequent histrionics.

As a minister in the Centre there is no any worth-while contribution to his credit. It is a pity nothing for his whole life has come out from him to establish his hold or otherwise over pen. Not a single tract or even a 10-page printed material has escaped his hand. As a matter of fact, it sounds extremely odd that this son of the soil should have not left for posterity anything in legacy for them to dote upon.

As a lawyer, he nowise is ranked among tne toppers.

Amarnath Kak

Amarnath Kak has been a leading lawyer, say, a topper. Of brilliant personality, sprawling commanding moustaches, tall, with a body-build sans a bend or a dent, he was a model of health, both physical and mental. He would be seen walking imperiously, exuding airs of defiance and self-confidence. Such postures of self-confidence and defiant-look are the product of life's good habits which he in ample measure possessed. He is not feared to have stretched his profession to the shocking extent of becoming extortionate and exacting in his relations with his clients. It is said he was somewhat compassionate and had considerations for the indigent, unlike so many pleaders who, I have discerned, don't scruple to remove chadars from the shoulders of their peasant-clients, even after being paid a very hefty fee. Lawyer's profession has been called by some fools as very noble one; but I don't lend any credence thereto after observing what they do and how they behave with their unfortunate clientele, particularly illiterate and artless. They have the avarice of Shylock, nay, more than that. And when they are before judges to plead their clients' cases, they bungle, stammer, labour at words which don't flash within them because they have run dry of them.

Kak played a gallant role in the famous Durganag agitation in the beginning, but is reported to have compromised his stand as is the wont of all K. P. leaders, as it were.

He had a deep association with the Y. Sabha, but subsequently left it, as has been done by the bulk of its leaders who got substantial pecuniary gains and Government recognition as an inducement to their abandoning the forum of the Sabha and playing traitor.

Kak like Teng left the State after 1947 to practise outside, frustrated as he grew over the wholesale political change in the State. Ramachandra Kak, one of the Prime Mininsters during S. M. H. Singh's rule, was one of his brothers.

Kak was a scholar, pregnant with vast erudition. He was conversant with Vedas, Persian, Sanskrit and the like. He was an agreeably orthodox Pandit and was a vegetarian.

P. N. Kanna

I vividly recollect the mien, deportment, the agility, which characterised Kanna while he edited the now-extinct daily Martand under Kashyapbandhu and subsequently Sheonarayan Fotedar.

He was a greatly charming and charismatic individual, auburn hair, handsome face and a harmonious pleasing physical structure.

Martand was in very high reputation those days insomuch that the Government deemed it imperative to ban in part its publication. Yet it remained operative, serving us—the students of impressionable age group—as a formidable inspiration.

I recollect Sabha activities those days were near-revolutionary, as it was under the hegemony of great leaders as Kashyapbandhu and Sheonarayan. Necessarily a good, dynamic leadership or otherwise does leave its impact.

All the intimidations administered to Kanna didn't deflect him from his chosen path and programme of mirroring the genuine wrongs foisted upon Pandits. The result of all this was that he was deported from the State and poor great man! he had to live in virtual exile, unheard of, unwept and unmourned. The same fate that befell his mentor Kashyapbandhu. Bandhu met extinction braving the pangs of unbearable loneliness, subject to filial and wifely desertions and so did Kanna. Pity the two great Pandit stalwarts were totally forgotten by their ungrateful community which they served brilliantly and fearlessly till their final dissolution.

Dr. Jagatmohini

Dr. Jagatmohini is possibly the only lady social worker with a very keen sense of societal affairs being herself a descendant of the community a few whereof have occupied the spaces of my study. By profession she is a doctor, deeply immersed in rendering her office very skilfully, painstakingly, diligently and with utmost sincerity, sans any overwhelming passion for exaction from those who approach her for the sake of redressal of their woes, physical, social, domestic, economic and the like.

This can be traced to her distinguished ancestry in part and partly to the inextinguishable flame of puplic service which has endeared her to all and sundry irrespective of hues political and religious.

During the conspicuous Parmeshwari incident, she manifested her inner grit, stamina and zeal for public service involving ministry to the suffering human numbers, of a superb and sublime type : jumping into the fray, deriding and berating political taboos and inhibitions, she responded to the woes of the community splendiferously and her hospitalisation of the bleeding and dying youth and womenfolk, seeking asylum in her Hospital, from the police atrocities and brutalities, was verily magnanimous and admirable. So many limitations were sought to be imposed on her, but like a defiant dazzling orb, she appeared and routed the designs of elements who intended to bridle her programmes and plans of action through the exercise of intimidation, victimisation, persecution, libel and what not. The more severities were perpetrated upon her, the more determined she grew to wholeheartedly meet the urges of the public. Her now deceased husband, Dr. O. N. Thussu, definitely conformed to her inner vibrations by rendering round-the-clock service to the atrocity—subjected numbers of her community. While we are put in mind of Mother Teresa, we effortlessly are reminded of her (Dr. Mohini's) missionary work during that period of extreme and historically significant travail.

Her Hospital as before and as at present, is a symbol of service and her treatment to the patients and their attendants is highly sympathetic, betokening inveterate fellow-feeling. The patients, their attendants, throng about her indiscriminately, freely, unreservedly, narrating their woe-loaded, painful stories and the doctor lends a sympathy-filled hearing with a view to alleviate suffering. And by so doing, she draws satisfaction and sustenance for her future work.

Her Hospital runs a women's club catering to multitudinous needs of deserving womenfolk.

Dr. J. Mohini had the privilege of witnessing the Mushairas attended by no less celebrities than Chakbast, Dr. Iqbal and others. Developing admiration for such poets, she draws relief from her hectic schedule by herself settling upon the poetic theme of varied kinds, both in English and Hindi.

She is credited with having raised the status of the then Vishwabharti School to that of a flourishing College and held the Presidency of V. B. Educational complex for long seventeen years sans break, and again for a five-year term.

Her joining the Janata Party was as big a flop as the Party itself. She lost, not surprisingly, the Election on the Janata mandate. She was horribly roughed up by professional hoodlums, resulting in her sustaining fractures. She sighs out that the electoral rout she suffered was partly due to treacherous role of a few Pandits of her Community and adds that but for their perfidious role she would have won.

Her Political stints generated ire in the authorities resulting in an adverse impact upon her Hospital too. But she stood rock-like, determined not to be cowed down and stuck to her principles of truth and honesty with unflinching devotion, come what may. She was for her staunch nationalist role dubbed as "Hindustan Ki Sarpani" (Indian Serpent).

Dr. Mohini is a human number in our Kashmir who considers human interests as above her ignorable personal interests. It is a treat to be in her hospital chambers by her side and see her dispense justice of various sorts much to the satisfaction of the needy and the observers.

S. K. Kaul

S. K. Kaul appears a gentleman par-excellence, thoroughly decent and abhorrent of duplicity, possibly traced to his splendid ancestral traditions.

That he has for the main part of his life, hitherto, been devoted to the educational cause, is verily a redeeming feature, a gleam of hope darkling. Politics by and large as I harbour, has been his scoff as, though he had many a political stint, at once glorious and immaculate, he reckons it, as does every one seeking quietude, a total identification with mendacity, untruth and malpractices. This nowise implies that pre-independence country-politics was also an exercise in vandalism. No, not so; that was aimed at ending colonial rule, today's is at self-aggrandisement. Why Kaul didn't launch himself into pre-1947 politics is a paradox unto me. I can't help feeling he would essentially have featured there very brilliantly.

On viewing him one lends oneself susceptible to engendering the feeling that he is independent-minded, doing what he wills to, recking little about the consequence.

Anyway, let me descant upon his doings. He plunged into hectic social activities in 1932 and remained in the Y. Sabha up to 1951. He has been witness to the J. L. Kilam's Y. Sabha presidential stint. With the start of the celebrated Durganag agitation, he from a member became the Sabha General Secretary, simultaneously discharging the office of the printer and publisher of the erstwhile daily Martand.

Kaul has rendered social services while in the Sabha. For the relief of the destitute and widows and orphans he evinced no less interest in the collections of cash and kind. This he did in cooperation with Shri Shamlal Gurtu whom Kaul reckons as a missionary, given to social activities directed at reformation. Mr. Kaul worked as the manager of the Martand.

In the year 1951 Kaul, as did Kashyapbandhu, alienated himself from the Sabha, then under the Fotedar hegemony, as

he didn't lend concurrence to Fotedar's contesting the election against a National Conference candidate.

He has been actively associated with the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industries, and here he brought his experiences and experiments in the field to bear upon the Chamber deliberations and activities. He was its President for two successive terms and this office he is feared to have discharged with unalloyed efficiency and spotless sagacity.

In the educational realm his activities have sprawled so far as to cover almost all the aided public schools, save, yes, a few. The disgraceful condition of National High School building Karan Nagar, until a year or so ago born of a devastating fire or an act of arson which totally engulfed and shattered it, had become his prime concern and he assured me when I saw him last, that it would be rebuilt before long. (The building presents now a very imposing look having been reconstructed).

Kaul had presidential spells of Women's Welfare Trust school complex, Girls' High School, Sathu, Arya Putri Patshala, DAV Higher Secondary School, Vishwa - Bharti College-School complex.

Kaul has been a member of the State unit of the Redcross in its initial stage ; thereafter he became its secretary and for fifteen years now he is its treasurer ; he is simultaneously the honorary treasurer of the J & K State Tuberculosis Association.

Way back in 1942 he became the member-president of Kashmir Seed Growers' Association. It was a challenging task as due to war conditions the supply of seed was altogether disrupted.

That he has been the founder of the Central Vegetable Seed Breeding Station at Katrain, Kulu, is, doubtless, heartening and redounds to his credit, since it is the chief seed-breeding centre in India. He was a member of the Dharmarth Council for eight years. Currently he is the president of Durganag Trust. He has represented the J & K State on more than fifteen Central Government Trade and Commercial Committees.

Besides all this, he has been associated with so many more organisations and committees.

He joined the National Conference in the year 1964 at the bidding of G. M. Sadiq, then the C. M. In 1967 he contested election to the State Assembly from the Habbakadal constituency and with success and remained as its member till 1972; in 1977 be recontested from the same constituency, but lost, the vicious influence of the much-hated Central Janata - rule not sparing him.

While a legislator, he fearlessly and fiercely condemned and berated the Government's attitude in not returning Parmeshwari, the indigent Pandit girl who through machinations and stratagem and her own willingness got converted to Islam, to the Pandit-fold. Be it noted it was during Sadiq's time that the religious susceptibilities of Pandits were inordinately injured. Kaul's independent stand on this incident did, I speculate, incur for him the displeasure and ire of the Government, but Kaul recked little therefor.

He is currently, besides so many assignments, a trustee on the executive committee of the Sher-i-Kashmir National Medical Institute Trust whereof he has been a founder-member.

Kaul is abhorrent of corrupt practices and is not inclined to amassing of booty and spoil.

Kaul must, we express, being currently incharge of Durganag temple administration, restore to it its pristine sanctity and purge it unrelentingly of indiscriminate rabble using it for consumption of charas, card-playing, gambling and for defecating and other disgraceful sprees.

Kaul is temperamentally convulsive and stares rude to any visitor who has not been able to curry his favour. He is unjustifiably narrow-minded many a time and behaves in the tradition of French suzerains of the past as Lious XIV. All this notwithstanding, he has some inherent merit.

He is reported, during the Parmeshwari episode, to have refused the services of Redcross Ambulance for transporting victims of police atrocities to hospitals, particularly Ratan Rani Hospital which of all the hospitals, stood the ordeal under its munificent administrator, Dr. Jagatmohini.

Justice J. N. Bhat

J. N. Bhat, to me at least, is an unenviable figure, having risen to the Justice-stature through a freak of fortune built for him by Sheonarayan Fotedar whose stooge he remained for long years, rather than his own inherent merit which he is grossly deficient in.

He is unpleasingly corpulent, but of late has dwindled, yet the mass of flesh is disproportionate to his short-stature.

Readers shouldn't let the impression dawn upon them that having been a justice in the State High Court, he might have been of some extraordinary merit. No, that is not the case. He got the prize-post through the good offices of the then Chairman of the Legislative Council, Mr. Fotedar, who happened to be close to Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad in whom the spirit of doing good to others was dominant.

He in his legal profession is a mediocrity, unquestioningly. He can't orate convincingly, nor is his delivery striking.

He had no Sabha presidential-stint, because he wholeheartedly preferred to play second fiddle to the domineering Fotedar. But he did well, or else he could not have found such a boost as to become a high-court judge.

Of late, a pungent stigma revolves around him and that is, he is feared to have laid his hands on a massive Pandit-fortune of over 7-lakh rupees which he attracted to himself through a reported sell-out of chunks of community land. He very lately confessed to his being in possession of this sum or thereabouts, but that is no indication of his being honest in his dealings. The longer he retains this fortune with him, the graver his charge becomes.

Bhat inherently possesses no leadership traits, but I am drawn to bring him within the range of my description since he had some Vice-Presidential spells under Fotedar.

But a leader necessarily should not be a Vice-President or so, and conversely a Vice-President or so, mayn't necessarily have leadership qualities.

Justice Bhat has been the foreword contributor to this study of mine, driven as I am to do so for his some non-descript qualities which definitely shield him from any unrelenting disparagement. Some semblances of suavity in him ~~got~~ yet attune this writer to indite the indisputable fact of his being a possessor of great social links rendering him near impregnable in several ways.

In 1947 he is feared to have been returned to the Praja Sabha by "an overwhelming majority", representing a rural belt.

In 1962, Bhat was elected to the State Legislative Assembly, but in the discharge of the role as Legislator featured no prominently and effectively.

Variegated spells of assignments conferred upon him here in the State and outside have tended to boost him personally, sans scattering their benefits around which he could easily do.

All this notwithstanding, Mr. Bhat has the prospect of furbishing his image if he so wills.

Harjilal Raina

Harjilal appeared on the Sabha scene, greatly pained as he felt on discerning the rabidly fissiparous tendencies marking its functioning. Being somewhat sincere in his outlook, intensely wanting to effect a metamorphosis in the shabby plight of the Sabha, he very much wished to don the Sabha with a new mantle so as to enable it to undertake a programme catering to the aspirations of the Pandit-community as a whole.

Pandits responded to him near-wholeheartedly and representatives from rural and very far-flung areas flocked to him with their variegated problems. Harjilal attended to them sans ostentation and from the bottom of the heart wished to set the dissipated fabric in order. But the frustration and recalcitrant jolts from around administered a palpable setback to his sincerity-based ventures calculated to transform the Pandit society.

His greatest lapse, when Sabha president, was to have taken Dr. Peshin on the Sabha panel as the latter is conspicuously notorious for generating schism and factionalism. Raina's resolution broke with the successive affronts hurled against him by Peshin. He got exhausted beneath the load of wanton Peshin assault. Nevertheless, he continued harbouring some divine dispensation.

It unquestioningly goes to the credit of Harjilal that he, a fearless Sabha combatant, a sole representative of the Pandit community, once staged a dharna singly, on the Ganpatyar road in protest against the killing of a senile Pandit by a hoodlum. Harjilal demanded punishment for the assassin. None out of the array of the pseudo-leaders came out in denunciation of this murderous act, save him.

He through senility and trouble accelerated by Peshin depravity and mischief, aimed at wholesale denigration, countenanced a type of decrepitude reflected in the impairment of his articulation. This was exploited by the 3-man Peshin clique excessively.

He would very frequently convene Pandit meetings at his home and at Sabha office, exhaustively descanting upon the multiplying Pandit problems.

Raina died a sore man, spent in energy, with his reformatory zeal unabated, his longings unfulfilled.

"Truly speaking, Shri Raina's life is a story of great stress and struggle for serving the humanity at large. Revenue officers treat him as their mentor and people in general consider him a friend and selfless well-wisher of all. He believes in Gandhian philosophy and follows the teachings of Lord Krishna in the Gita. He is above self interests and is always ready to render whatever assistance and help he can give to the needy...........".

J. L. Kaul Jalali

Jalali J. L. of Karannagar, was of scholastic bent of mind, given to paper-and-book-study. He was seen with an elevated wooden structure in his front whereon were littered newspapers and books, intensively studying them like a studious student.

He was coxcombical and would look sideways while walking, in a bid to attract public compliments to him, reckoning himself to be a leader.

He would highly rodomontade, strut and shrug his shoulders and talk showily, considering himself a very important personality which he nowise was.

He had a presidential spell of the Sabha, but during this period the moribund condition of it no way improved. He was capable of pique at points of honour and would roar and thunder when spoken against. Accommodation was far from him. Once this writer had a very bitter experience of the Jalalis (the two brothers, both moving with staff) standing up with their respective staffs from their seats in the Sabha hall (Shitalnath), stalking towards me in a bid to cane me when criticised justly by me. Mr. Sheonarayan Fotedar, may his soul rest in peace! came to my rescue, declaring that I was correct in my stand. Fotedar's intervention saved me or else the staff-blows would have rained on me, with what consequences I don't know.

Thereafter, Jalali came to talk to me freely, knowing that I wasn't susceptible to being humbled.

He has authored a book, or I think more than one. A copy of a book he has authored, he presented to me respectfully when I met him at his residence, once.

No corrupt practices surround his name, so far as my information about him goes.

H. N. Jattu

In these days H. N. Jattu is zealously, vigorously, pursuing the course of action calculated to make the K. P. plight felt by others. He has stamina, merit, which he harnesses on occasions to combat the ills foisted from time to time upon the Kashmiri minority community.

His association with the Kashmir politics is traced to 1958 when he was in deep association with the K. P. doyen, Mr. S. N. Fotedar.

In the sixties he joined the State Congress ranks, but withdraw from it in 1967, when Parmeshwari incident rocked the entire Kashmiri Pandit structure, resulting in mass meets, rallies, meetings, processions, expressions of inordinate resentments, thundering demonstrations, symbolic of Pandit ire against the Sadiq-regime which is considered to have fanned the Pandit resentment by its anti-Pandit actions.

A satyagraha was launched at New Delhi to represent the Pandit case, and Jattu was jailed for twentyone days. Again he was sentenced to imprisonment for over six months and quartered in the Srinagar Central Jail.

Sensing and seeing the poor, rather traitrous performance of A. S. K. P. Conference, Jattu left it, and formed a separate organisation, All India K. P. Conference by name, in 1983.

In it he has been evincing great interest and endeavours hard to attract pandits to its new radical programme.

Never in my adult life - time have I seen any pandit organisation commanding such massive and formidable gathering as does the All India K. P. Conference. Pandits, young and old, senile and decrepit, flock to its headoffice chambers at Ganpatyar and voice their grievances and difficulties, especially of remote areas who suffer troubles unheard of.

The activities of the Jattu organisation attract preponderant news columns in the national leading dailies.

Unwarranted and entirely illegal occupation of Hindu shrines and places of worship at distant places from Srinagar and discriminations have been one of the main concerns of the Jattu-led All I. K. P. Conference. Representations and deputations wait on the governmental authorities in a bid to have the seized and occupied assets and shrine-properties and effects restored.

Liaison has started to be established with the K. P. groups in India and outside of it with a view to concentrate them under the single and singular banner of All I. K. P. Conference; letters, missives and varied kinds of communications and correspondence are being directed to different pandit quarters and solicit their opinion and rally them under one mighty formidable puissant organisation.

Pandits by and large should understand that approaching any dignitary of whatever political hue and affiliation, is not anywise deleterious; if All I. K. P. Conference personnel meet any individual leader, whether of N. C. or any other party at the latter's request, vehemently espousing their cause and mirroring the injustice perpetrated upon the pandit-community, what is the harm? It is a rash conclusion to become dubious about them and attribute motives to their sincere moves and intentions.

On February 20, 1986, houses of Anantnag district Kashmiri Pandits and of other parts were subjected to arson, besides mass-scale desecration of temples and places of worship sans any rhyme or reason. It was, in that hour of extreme crisis, only the A.I.K.P. Conference which responded to the challenge and geared and galvanised itself sans inhibitions to come to the rescue of the affected persons and did render a commendable job.

Jattu from the depths of the heart wants a political mantle for the A.I.K.P. Conference and it would be in the fitness of things if it was invested with one. Sans a political character, any pandit organisation or for that matter any organisation is a hoax, a myth, a fraud; no strides can be made without it. The present life of competition, rivalry, militancy, jingoism must have matching organisational skill and we would ask Jattu to declare it an unalloyed political organisation; not only this, the political organisation should have a media of expression—a paper. And we feel he would do it, and restore to the community all the pristine glory for which it was celebrated in the past.

But Jattu - Zalpuri nexus at once obnoxious and undesirable should die down or else the organisation becomes a sick unit, which it is heading towards apace.

To the K. P. Youth

You have suffered and are suffering inordinately which verily could be redressed if you were in possession of a capable forum, a sincere and dynamic leader and a functional press. You have been and are currently sans even one of the three inevitable essentials for a healthy functioning of the community whereto you belong.

In the past tyranny and injustice have been perpetrated upon you by former K. P. leaders by keeping the Y. Sabha stripped of a much-needed political character. Yet it is without one. The upshot of this is that the community has no voice in higher echelons and openings are provided to the Youth as a matter of courtesy in the departments of Government and the like, and not of right. But the Dr. Farooq Regime is wiping out discrimination.

No group, society or a union can make headway or thrive without a dynamic organisation peopled by sincere and selfless corps of workers and headed by a capable and an all-rounder leader. An organisation without a political programe is a myth, an anachronism and rags of time. Modern era of competition and survival of the fittest doesn't admit of indolent and sedentary leaders, day-dreaming and ruminant, highly contemplative and soaked in somnolence.

None can salvage you except your own selves. Wrest the control of the Sabhas from their ill-reputed so called leaders along with huge booty of money belonging to you. Don't fail in this task wherein is centred your future and that of your successors.

Impart a political character to your Sabhas. Let the two Sabhas be merged into one and only one, so that the forum is one with a splendidly relevant and revolutionary programme for your future emancipation.

Choose a leader, entrust him with powers and authority and follow him unquestioningly. Watch him and gauge his course of action and adopt your future course accordingly. But don'nt rest on your oars, don't feel complacent, but strive, and stop not till the goal is reached.

You will positively render yourselves invulnerable against all onslaughts by having a radical organisation, a selfless leader and your daily or weekly paper.